JS 44 (Rev. 12/12)

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT P.4GE OF THIS FORM.)

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I. (a) PLAINTIFFS OL by and through his parent S.H. and S.H.									
G.L. by and through his parent, S.H. and S.H.				Saucon Valley School District					
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)				County of Residence of First Listed Defendant (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY) NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.					
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number) Angela Uliana-Murphy of Murphy & Murphy, P.C. P.O. Box 97, 106 North Franklin Street, Pen Argyl PA 186610-863-8502				Attorneys (If Known) Karl Romberger, of Sweet Stevens Katz & Williams 331 East Butler Avenue, New Britain PA 18901 215-345-9111					
II. BASIS OF JURISDI	ICTION (Place an "X" in C	One Box Only)	III. CI	TIZENSHIP OF P	PRINCIPA	L PARTIES			
1 U.S. Government		Citiz		TF DEF	Incorporated or Pri		PTF 4	ont) DEF	
☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant			Citiz	Citizen of Another State				□ 5	
				en or Subject of a	3 17 3	Foreign Nation		□ 6	□ 6
IV. NATURE OF SUIT	(Place an "X" in One Box O	nly)							
CONTRACT 110 Insurance 120 Marine 130 Miller Act 140 Negotiable Instrument 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment 151 Medicare Act 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excludes Veterans) 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits 160 Stockholders' Suits 190 Other Contract 195 Contract Product Liability 196 Franchise REAL PROPERTY 210 Land Condemnation 220 Foreclosure 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment 240 Torts to Land 245 Tort Product Liability 290 All Other Real Property	PERSONAL INJURY 310 Airplane 315 Airplane Product Liability 320 Assault, Libel & Slander 330 Federal Employers' Liability 340 Marine 345 Marine Product Liability 350 Motor Vehicle Product Liability 360 Other Personal Injury Medical Malpractice CIVIL RIGHTS 440 Other Civil Rights 441 Voting 442 Employment 443 Housing/ Accommodations 445 Amer. w/Disabilities - Employment 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other 448 Education	PERSONAL INJUR 365 Personal Injury - Product Liability Product Liability Product Liability Product Liability Product Liability PRISONAL PROPES 370 Other Fraud 371 Truth in Lending 380 Other Personal Property Damage Product Liability PERSONAL PROPES 370 Other Fraud 371 Truth in Lending 380 Other Personal Property Damage Product Liability PRISONER PETITIO Habeas Corpus: 463 Alien Detaine 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence 530 General 535 Death Penalty Other:	T G G G G G G G G G	25 Drug Related Scizure of Property 21 USC 881 20 Other LABOR 10 Fair Labor Standards Act 12 Labor/Management Relations 10 Railway Labor Act 11 Family and Medical Leave Act 10 Other Labor Litigation 11 Employee Retirement Income Security Act 12 Naturalization Application 5 Other Immigration Actions	422 Appc 423 With 28 U 423 With 28 U 424 Square 424 Square 425 Square 426 Square	cal 28 USC 158 drawal ISC 157 RTYRIGHTS rrights at emark SECURITY (1395ff) k Lung (923) C/DIWW (405(g)) Title XVI	☐ 375 False CI ☐ 400 State Re ☐ 410 Antitrus ☐ 430 Banks and ☐ 450 Commen ☐ 470 Rackete ☐ Corrupt ☐ 480 Consum ☐ 490 Cable/S: ☐ 850 Securitie ☐ Exchan; ☐ 890 Other St ☐ 891 Agricult ☐ 893 Environ; ☐ 895 Freedom Act ☐ 896 Arbitrati ☐ 899 Adminis Act/Rev	laims Act capportion that Manking the Common of the Common	nment mg aced and tions odities/ actions fatters mation rocedure
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VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:) D	DEMAND \$ CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint: DEA Appeal JURY DEMAND:			nt:		
VIII. RELATED CASE IF ANY	(See instructions):	JUDGE				T NUMBER			
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FOR OFFICE USE ONLY		$\overline{}$							
RECEIPT # AN	1 OUNT	APPLYING IFP		JUDGE		MAG. JUD	GE.		

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

CASE MANAGEMENT TRACK DESIGNATION FORM

CIVIL ACTION

G.L., by and through his parent, S.H., and

S.H.

v.		:			
Saucon Valley School District		:	NO.		
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 (b) Social Security – Cases requesting review of a decision of the Secretary of Health and Human Services denying plaintiff Social Security Benefits. 					
(c) Arbitration - Cases required to be designated for arbitration under Local Civil Rule 53.2.					
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12/3/15					_
Date	Attorney-at		Attorney for Plaintiffs		
610-863-8502	610-863-3022		murphylaw@epix.net		_
Telephone	FAX Numb	er	E-Mail Address		

(Civ. 660) 10/02

Case 5:15-cv-06425-HSP Document 1 Filed 12/03/15 Page 3 of 11 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA — DESIGNATION FORM to I assignment to appropriate calendar.	be used by counsel to indicate the category of the case for the purpose of			
1457 Manor Drive, Bethlehem PA 18015 Address of Plaintiff:				
Address of Defendant: 2097 Polk Valley Road, Hellertown PA 18055				
Place of Accident, Incident or Transaction: Saucon Valley School District, 209				
Northampton County, Pennsylvania (Use Reverse Side For A	Additional Space)			
Does this civil action involve a nongovernmental corporate party with any parent corporation a				
(Attach two copies of the Disclosure Statement Form in accordance with Fed.R.Civ.P. 7.1(a)	Yes□ No□X			
Does this case involve multidistrict litigation possibilities?	Yes□ No □ x			
RELATED CASE, IF ANY:	D. T. C.			
Case Number:Judge	Date Terminated:			
Civil cases are deemed related when yes is answered to any of the following questions:				
1. Is this case related to property included in an earlier numbered suit pending or within one y	ear previously terminated action in this court?			
	Yes□ Not X			
2. Does this case involve the same issue of fact or grow out of the same transaction as a prior action in this court?	suit pending or within one year previously terminated			
action in this court:	Yes□ No□ x			
3. Does this case involve the validity or infringement of a patent already in suit or any earlier of	X			
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1. Indemnity Contract, Marine Contract, and All Other Contracts	1. □ Insurance Contract and Other Contracts			
2. □ FELA	2. Airplane Personal Injury			
3. □ Jones Act-Personal Injury	3. Assault, Defamation			
4. □ Antitrust	4. ☐ Marine Personal Injury			
5. Patent	5. □ Motor Vehicle Personal Injury			
6. □ Labor-Management Relations	6. □ Other Personal Injury (Please specify)			
7. 🖫 Civil Rights	7. Products Liability			
8. Habeas Corpus	8. Products Liability — Asbestos			
9. Securities Act(s) Cases	9. All other Diversity Cases			
10. □ Social Security Review Cases	(Please specify)			
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ARBITRATION CERT Angela Uliana-Murphy (Check Appropriate Ca				
, counsel of record do hereby certif				
□ Pursuant to Local Civil Rule 53.2, Section 3(c)(2), that to the best of my knowledge and \$150,000.00 exclusive of interest and costs; ¬X Relief other than monetary damages is sought.	belief, the damages recoverable in this civil action case exceed the sum of			
DATE: 12/3/15	49897			
DATE: // Attorney-at-Law	Attorney I.D.#			
NOTE: A trial de novo will be a trial by jury only if the				
I certify that, to my knowledge, the within case is not related to any case now pending or except as noted above.	within one year previously terminated action in this court			
DATE: 1213115	49897			
CIV. 609 (5/2012)	Attorney I.D.#			

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

G.L, by and through his parent,

S.H.; and S.H.

Plaintiffs, : Civil Action No.

:

v.

Saucon Valley School District

COMPLAINT

Plaintiffs G.L., by and through his parent, S.H. and S.H., bring this suit against defendant, Saucon Valley School District, and allege as follows:

NATURE OF THE ACTION

- 1. G.L. is a 11 year old student who has been identified as a student with a disability in need of specially designed instruction under the disability category of Emotional Disturbance. He was previously identified as a student with a Speech and Language Impairment. G.L. is entitled to special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. Sections 1400 *et seq*.
- 2. S.H. requested an administrative due process hearing seeking an appropriate placement for G.L. and alleging that he was denied a free and appropriate public education from April of 2013, including the 2013-2014, 2014-2015 school years and continuing to the present.
- 3. G.L. has significant emotional needs that cannot be met in the public school setting. As a result, S.H. sought a highly specialized, intensive program to meet G.L.'s needs. G.L.'s individualized education program (IEP) from the end of the 2012-2013 school year failed to meet his needs. G.L.'s behavioral needs were not adequately assessed or addressed. His IEPs contained no Positive Behavior Support Plan or behavioral goals until June of 2014. His

difficulties with peer interactions and underlying emotional issues were also not addressed in the IEPs. The educational placements provided to G.L. were not appropriate to meet his academic or functional needs as required by the IDEA.

- 4. G.L. failed to make meaningful education progress from the end of the 2012-2013 school year through the present time.
- 5. On September 20, 2015, Hearing Officer William Culleton issued a decision that denied S.H.'s placement request and determined that the District did not deny G.L. a free and appropriate public education.
- 6. The Hearing Officer's decision denying the S.H.'s placement request and finding that G.L. was not denied a free and appropriate public education from the end of the 2012-2013 school year through the present time violates the IDEA. This is an appeal of that decision.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 7. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to 20 U.S.C. Section 1415 (i)(2) and (3), as an appeal of an administrative hearing under the IDEA and pursuant to 28 U.S.C. Section 1331.
- 8. Venue is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. Section 1391(b) in that the district is located in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and because a substantial part of the events and/or omissions giving rise to the Plaintiffs' claims occurred in this judicial district.

THE PARTIES

- 9. G.L. is 11 years old and resides with his family within the District in Northampton County, Pennsylvania. G.L.brings this action by and through his parent, S.H.
- 10. S.H. is the mother of G.L. She has primary physical custody of G.L. and has the right to make educational decisions for him.

11. The District is a school district in Northampton County, Pennsylvania and is a local educational agency (LEA) within the meaning of the IDEA. As such, it receives federal funds for the purpose of educating children with disabilities within its boundaries.

ADMINISTRATIVE EXHAUSTION

- 12. On April 30, 2015, S.H. brought a due process complaint pursuant to the IDEA seeking an appropriate placement for G.L. and compensatory education from April of 2013.
- 13. A due process hearing was held over the course of three hearing sessions on June 19, 2015, August 31, 2015 and September 3, 2015.
- 14. In a decision dated September 20, 2015, Hearing Officer William Culleton found that the district did not fail to provide G.L. with a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) during the relevant time period and denied and dismissed the Plaintiffs' complaint.
- 15. The Hearing Officer erred in finding that the District's failure to timely assess G.L, conduct an Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA), and provide a Positive Behavior Support Plan (PBSP) were procedural errors.
- 16. The Hearing Officer's findings that the services provided to the student were appropriate were not supported by the record and constitute a violation of the IDEA.
- 17. There was not sufficient evidence at the due process hearing to support the conclusion that G.L. made meaningful educational progress on his IEP goals.
- 18. There was not sufficient evidence at the due process hearing to support the conclusion that the behavioral assessments conducted by the District were sufficient.
- 19. The Hearing Officer erred in basing his decision on the conclusion that the verbal reports of G.L. were not credible. G.L. did not testify and an independent evaluation ordered by the Hearing Officer found G.L.'s statements to be valid and required significant, specialized support.

- 20. The Hearing Officer erred in failing to consider an independent evaluation ordered by him after the first hearing session. The independent evaluation supported the concerns of S.H. and the validity of the reports made by G.L.
- 21. Ignoring the reports made by G.L and the conclusions of the independent report result violate the IDEA.
- 22. There was not sufficient evidence at the due process hearing that the District provided G.L. with a free and appropriate public education to support such a finding by the Hearing Officer.
- 23. The decision that the District did not deny G.L. a free and appropriate public education violated the IDEA.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

- 24. G.L. received special education and related services from the District.
- 25. G.L. has a history of extreme behavioral issues. He also has language and social skills deficits.
- 26. G.L. was initially identified as a student with a Speech and Language Impairment and received services through an IEP. From Kindergarten, he displayed serious behaviors such as tantrums, screaming, cursing, hitting and making threats.
- 27. In March of 2013, G.L.'s behavior significantly deteriorated. He was hospitalized in May of 2013 and during the 2013-2014 school year.
- 28. In November of 2013, G.L.was placed in a school based Partial Hospitalization program (PHP).
- 29. During the 2013 school year, the district failed to assess and address G.L.'s emotional and functional needs.
- 30. G.L. was not reevaluated until the fall of 2013. The Reevaluation Report (RR) was

completed in December of 2013 and was one month late. No FBA was completed as part of the RR.

- 31. An IEP was developed on January 9, 2014. The IEP did not note behaviors as a concern for G.L. The IEP did not contain any behavioral goals or behavior plan.
- 32. G.L. continued to struggle with behaviors throughout the 2013-2014 school year. An FBA was finally conducted in May of 2014. This appears to be the first FBA in the record and serious behaviors were noted by history and during the current school year.
- 33. In November of 2014, G.L. was discharged from the PHP and placed in a Therapeutic Emotional Support class.
- 34. This placement has continued not to meet G.L.'s needs. Problem behaviors continued as well as difficulties with peer interaction.
- 35. G.L. has expressed serious emotional concerns which have been ignored by the school and were not assessed or addressed in his educational placements.
- 36. The PHP and the Therapeutic Emotional Support placements have not assisted G.L. in addressing his underlying behavioral issues.
- 37. G.L. requires a highly specialized, intensive program to address his needs.
- 38. G.L. has also failed to make meaningful academic progress in the area of Reading. It does not appear that G.L.'s academic needs have been appropriately assessed.
- 39. As a result of the district's failure to adequately assess and support G.L.'s behavioral and academic needs, he has been denied a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).
- 40. As a result of the denial of FAPE, G.L. is entitled to an award of compensatory education from April of 2013 until such time as an appropriate placement is developed for him.
- 41. G.L. also requires an appropriate highly specialized and intensive program to meet his

behavioral and emotional needs.

COUNT I: THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT

- 42. All paragraphs above are incorporated herein by reference as if fully set forth.
- 43. The District failed to provide G.L. with a free and appropriate public education from the end of the 2012-2013 school year through the present time.
- 44. The District failed to provide G.L. with an IEP that was reasonably calculated to allow him to receive meaningful educational benefits in violation of the IDEA.
- 45. The evidence at the special education due process hearing established that G.L. did not receive a free and appropriate public education free and appropriate public education from the end of the 2012-2013 school year through the present time.
- 46. The evidence at the special education due process hearing established that G.L. requires a highly specialized, intensive placement to meet his emotional and behavioral needs.
- 47. The Hearing Officer violated the IDEA in determining that the District did not deny G.L. a free and appropriate public education and by failing to order an appropriate placement for G.L.

RELIEF REQUESTED

Wherefore, the Plaintiffs request that this Court:

- 1. Hear additional evidence on the appropriateness of G.L's IEP and whether the District provided him with a free and appropriate public education from the end of the 2012-2013 school year through the present time.
- 2. Reverse the decision of the Hearing Officer and order all relief that is appropriate under the IDEA, including but not limited to compensatory education and prospective placement.

- 3. Order the District to pay Plaintiffs their attorneys' fee and costs incurred in litigating this action pursuant to 20 U.S.C. Sections 1415(i)(3)(B).
- 4. Grant any other relief as the Court deems just and proper.

Dated: December 3, 2015

MURPHY & MURPHY, P.C.

Angela Uliana-Murphy, Esquire

Attorney I.D. No. 49897 106 North Franklin Street

P.O. Box 97

Pen Argyl PA 18072

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

G.L, by and through his parent,

S.H.; and S.H.

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Plaintiffs,

Civil Action No.

:

v.

:

Saucon Valley School District

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Angela Uliana-Murphy, hereby certify that on the foregoing Complaint was served upon the following counsel of record via regular mail:

Karl Romberger, Esquire Sweet, Stevens, Katz & Williams 331 East Butler Avenue New Britian PA 18091

December 3, 2015

Angela Uliana-Murphy Attorney I.D. No. 49897

106 North Franklin Street

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